

BOOK NOTICES

POWELL, A. MICHAEL. 1994. **Grasses of the Trans-Pecos and Adjacent Areas.** (ISBN 0-292-76553-3, hbk; ISBN 0-292-76556-8, pbk). University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819. \$75.00 hbk; \$29.95 pbk. 377 pp.

Texas west of the Pecos River is a wonderful land of deserts and mountains, with many peaks a mile or more high (up to 8751 ft on Guadalupe Peak). Powell's book accounts for 83 genera and 268 species of Trans-Pecos Poaceae (half of the grasses known from Texas). Endemic to that part of the state are 53 species. Most of the illustrations are the by-now-so-familiar ones from the Hitchcock *Manual* (1951). Artist Manning contributed a few original drawings; other illustrations are 22 black-and-white photos of Trans-Pecos scenery. Descriptions of species are given only in genera with but one species in the area; otherwise the genera alone are described, a disadvantage. Introductory chapters tell of the region, discuss grasses and grasslands, list the tribes and genera of Trans-Pecos Poaceae, and give a key to the 16 tribes included. Keys to genera and species are at appropriate places in the "descriptive grass flora" (75% of the book). The keys worked well for the 15 species of grasses I used to test them. Final chapters are a glossary, literature cited (ca. 150 entries), and an index. Frequently mentioned are taxonomic/nomenclatural aspects of various taxa. Nomenclature is up to date.—*John W. Thieret.*

JONES, DAVID L. 1993. **Cycads of the World. Ancient Plants in Today's Landscape.** (ISBN 1-56098-220-9, hbk). Smithsonian Institution Press, 470 L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, DC 20560. \$45.00 (plus \$2.25 postage). 312 pp.

This is a one-volume encyclopedia devoted to the 185 species of cycads. The illustrations—of plants, leaves, and cones—are the book's principal glory. Many (ca. 250) are fine color photos, some are original line drawings, and a few are reproductions of old engravings, color or black-and-white, from 19th century and later botanical works.

Part 1, about 30% of the volume, contain a most impressive wealth of information: discussions of the plants' history and prehistory, conservation, structure, economic importance, biology, cultivation, pests and diseases, and propagation. (Data on more recondite topics—e.g., gametophyte development, anatomy, chromosomes—must be sought elsewhere.) On the world map of distribution of cycads their occurrence in the United States—Florida and Georgia—was somehow overlooked; the error is corrected in the map of *Zamia*.

Part 2, the taxonomic section, presents a key to the 11 cycad genera and then an account of each genus and species. Generic accounts include a key to species (exception: no such key is given for *Cycas*, *Encephalartos*, and *Zamia*, because of the "confused state of the taxonomy" or the "size and complexity" of these genera). Then follow paragraphs on derivation of name, generic description, notable generic features, recent studies, habitat, cultivation, and propagation. Species accounts include description, notes on distribution and habitat, other notes, cultivation, and propagation. The bibliography has about 200 references; the index contains mostly scientific names. I recommend this excellently made book for cycadophiles and non-cycadophiles alike. Its relatively low price makes it one of the book bargains of the year.—*John W. Thieret.*